IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A remote control system configured to control a plurality of apparatuses divided into a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, comprising:

a central control system comprising at least a computer unit configured to receive ~~status~~service information from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus and remotely control said plurality of apparatuses based on said ~~status~~service information; ~~and~~

an information collection unit configured to collect ~~the status~~corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when ~~apparatus~~said service information of said at least an image forming apparatus is received by said central control system; and

said computer unit is configured to select based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The remote control system according to claim 1, further comprising:

an information processing unit configured to process said ~~status~~corresponding service information which is acquired from said plurality of apparatuses and is collected by said information collection unit; and

an information transmission unit configured to connect to terminal units provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses and subsequently transmitting said information processed by said information processing unit.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The remote control system according to claim 1, further comprising:

an information setting unit configured to set said ~~apparatus~~service information in advance of collecting said ~~status~~corresponding service information, for which said collection by said information collection unit is allowed.

Claim 4 (Original): The remote control system according to claim 1, wherein said information collected, from all of said plurality of apparatuses to be remotely controlled, by said information collection unit is related to pre-maintenance.

Claim 5 (Original): The remote control system according to claim 1, wherein said information collected, from all of said plurality of apparatuses to be remotely controlled, by said information collection unit is related to expendable supplies and material.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The remote control system according to claim 1, further comprising:

a group setting unit configured to set a group in advance of collecting said ~~status~~corresponding service information by dividing said plurality of image forming apparatuses into said predetermined number of groups.

Claim 7 (Original): The remote control system according to claim 2, further comprising:

an information alteration and addition unit configured to perform alteration and addition onto said information processed by said information processing unit.

Claim 8 (Original): The remote control system according to claim 2, further comprising:

an information destination setting unit configured to set a destination of information transmission performed by said information transmission unit.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 2, further comprising:

an information outputting unit configured to output said information processed by said information processing unit through at least one of an image formation on a display device, a data recording on a paper sheet, or an audible voice.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 2, further comprising:

an information transmitting unit configured to transmit said information processed by said information processing unit when a request for acquiring said processed information is received from any terminal unit of the terminal units.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A remote control system configured to control a plurality of apparatuses divided into a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, comprising:

a central control system comprising at least a computer unit configured to receive ~~status~~service information from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least one image forming apparatus and remotely control said plurality of apparatuses based on ~~status~~said service information of said at least an image forming apparatus;

an information accumulation unit configured to accumulate ~~apparatus~~corresponding service information when said ~~apparatus~~service information is received by said central control system from said at least an image forming apparatus of said plurality of apparatuses to be remotely controlled; ~~and~~

an information retrieval unit configured to retrieve ~~the status~~said corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said ~~apparatus~~service information of said at least an image forming apparatus is received by said central control system; and

said computer unit is configured to select based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The remote control system according to claim 11, further comprising:

an information processing unit configured to process said ~~status~~corresponding service information which is acquired from said plurality of apparatuses and is retrieved by said information retrieval unit; and

an information transmission unit configured to connect to terminal units provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses, and subsequently transmitting said information processed by said information processing unit.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The remote control system according to claim 11, further comprising:

an information setting unit configured to set said ~~apparatus~~service information in advance of retrieving said ~~status~~corresponding service information, for which said retrieval by said information retrieval unit is allowed.

Claim 14 (Original): The remote control system according to claim 11, wherein said information which is acquired from said plurality of apparatuses and being retrieved by said information retrieval unit is related to pre-maintenance.

Claim 15 (Original): The remote control system according to claim 11, wherein said information accumulated, from all of said plurality of apparatuses to be remotely controlled, by said information accumulation unit is related to expendable supplies and material.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The remote control system according to claim 11, further comprising:

a group setting unit configured to set a group in advance of retrieving said ~~status~~corresponding service information by dividing said plurality of image forming apparatuses into said predetermined number of groups.

Claim 17 (Original): The remote control system according to claim 16, further comprising:

a plurality of communication adapters connected to said plurality of image forming apparatuses for communicating with said central control system,

wherein said group setting unit divides said plurality of image forming apparatuses into a number of groups each assigned to said communication adapters.

Claim 18 (Original): The remote control system according to claim16, further comprising:

a plurality of communication adapters connected to said plurality of image forming apparatuses for communicating with said central control system,

wherein said group setting unit divides said plurality of image forming apparatuses into a number of groups each assigned to a predetermined number of said respective communication adapters.

Claim 19 (Original): The remote control system according to claim 16, wherein said plurality of image forming apparatuses are interconnected by way of communication networks incorporating a network control unit, and

wherein said group setting unit divides said plurality of image forming apparatuses into a number of groups each assigned to an IP address in said network system.

Claim 20 (Original): The remote control system according to claim 16,

wherein said plurality of image forming apparatuses are interconnected by way of communication networks incorporating a network control unit, and

wherein said group setting unit divides said plurality of image forming apparatuses into a number of groups each assigned to a predetermined number of IP addresses in said network system.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 12, further comprising:

an information alteration and addition unit configured to perform alteration and addition onto said information processed by said information processing unit.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 12, further comprising:

an information destination unit configured to set a destination of information transmission performed by said information transmission unit.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 12, further comprising:

an information outputting unit configured to output said information processed by said information processing unit through at least one of an image formation on a display device, a data recording on a paper sheet, or an audible voice.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 12, further comprising:

an information transmitting unit configured to transmit said information processed by said information processing unit when a request for acquiring said processed information is received from any terminal unit of the terminal units.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): A remote control system configured to control a plurality of apparatuses divided into a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, comprising:

a central control system comprising at least a computer unit configured to receive ~~status~~service information from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus and remotely control said plurality of apparatuses based on said ~~status~~service information;

an information collection unit configured to collect ~~the status~~corresponding service information from ~~from~~ other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus -when ~~apparatus~~said service information of said at least an image forming apparatus is received by said central control system;

said computer unit is configured to select based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus;

a first information processing unit configured to process said ~~apparatus~~corresponding service information;

a first information transmission unit configured to connect to terminal units provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses, and subsequently transmitting said ~~apparatus~~corresponding service information processed by said first information processing unit;

an information accumulation unit configured to accumulate said ~~apparatus~~corresponding service information when said ~~apparatus~~service information is received from said at least an image forming apparatus of said plurality of apparatuses to be remotely controlled;

an information retrieval unit configured to retrieve said ~~status~~corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said ~~apparatus~~service information of said at least an image forming apparatus is received by said central control system;

a second information processing unit configured to process said ~~apparatus~~service information received from said at least an image forming apparatus of said plurality of apparatuses and retrieved by said information retrieval unit;

a second information transmission unit configured to connect to the terminal units so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses, and subsequently transmitting said ~~apparatus~~corresponding service information processed by said second information processing unit; and

an information decision unit configured to determine whether or not an execution command is sent to any one of said information collection unit, said first information processing unit, said first information transmission unit, said information retrieval unit, said second information processing unit, and said second information transmission unit.

Claim 26 (Currently Amended): A method for controlling a plurality of apparatuses divided into a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, comprising:

receiving ~~status~~service information relayed to a central control system from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus;

controlling remotely said plurality of apparatuses based on said ~~status~~service information;

collecting corresponding service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material from all of said plurality of apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material is received from said at least an image forming apparatus;

selecting based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus;

processing received and collected information by information processing means;

connecting said central control system to terminal units provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses; and

transmitting said information processed by said information processing means.

Claim 27 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 26, further comprising:

providing alteration and addition onto said information processed by said information processing means.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 26, further comprising:

outputting said information processed by said information processing means through at least one of an image formation on a display device, a data recording on a paper sheet or an audible voice.

Claim 29 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 26, further comprising:

transmitting said information processed by said information processing means when a request for acquiring said processed information is received from any terminal unit of the terminal units.

Claim 30 (Currently Amended): A method for controlling a plurality of apparatuses divided into a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, comprising:

receiving ~~status~~service information relayed to a central control system from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus;

controlling remotely said plurality of apparatuses based on said ~~status~~service information;

accumulating ~~said status~~corresponding service information ~~for~~from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus in a memory unit when said service information is related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material and is received from said at least an image forming apparatus;

retrieving said ~~status~~corresponding service information from said memory unit for said other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said at least an image forming apparatus sends said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material to said central control system;

processing said received and retrieved information by information processing means;

selecting based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus;

connecting said central control system to the terminal units provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses; and

transmitting said information processed by said information processing means.

Claim 31 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 30, further comprising:

performing alteration and addition onto said information processed by said information processing means.

Claim 32 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 30, further comprising:

outputting said information processed by said information processing means through at least one of an image formation on a display device, a data recording on a paper sheet or an audible voice.

Claim 33 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 30, further comprising:

transmitting said information processed by said information processing means when a request for acquiring said processed information is received from any terminal unit of the terminal units.

Claim 34 (Currently Amended): A central control system configured to control a plurality of apparatuses divided into a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, based on ~~status~~service information received by said central control system from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus, said central control system being included in a remote control system, said central control system comprising:

an information collection unit configured to collect ~~the status~~corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said service information is related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material and is received by said central control system from said at least an image forming apparatus; and

said central control system is configured to select based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus.

Claim 35 (Currently Amended): The central control system according to claim 34, further comprising:

an information processing unit configured to process said ~~status~~corresponding service information which is acquired from said plurality of apparatuses and is collected by said information collection unit; and

an information transmission unit configured to connect to terminal units provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses, and subsequently transmitting said information processed by said information processing unit.

Claim 36 (Currently Amended): The central control system according to claim 34, further comprising:

an information setting unit configured to set said information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material in advance of collecting said ~~status~~corresponding service information, for which said collection by said information collection unit is allowed.

Claim 37 (Previously Presented): The central control system according to claim 34, further comprising:

a group setting unit configured to set a group in advance of collecting said status information by dividing said plurality of image forming apparatuses into said predetermined number of groups.

Claim 38 (Original): The central control system according to claim 35, further comprising:

an information alteration and addition unit configured to perform alteration and addition onto said information processed by said information processing unit.

Claim 39 (Original): The central control system according to claim 35, further comprising:

an information destination setting unit configured to set a destination of information transmission performed by said information transmission unit.

Claim 40 (Previously Presented): The central control system according to claim 35, further comprising:

an information outputting unit configured to output said information processed by said information processing unit through at least one of an image formation on a display device, a recording data on a paper sheet or an audible voice.

Claim 41 (Previously Presented): The central control system according to claim 35, further comprising:

an information transmitting unit configured to transmit said information processed by said information processing unit when a request for acquiring said processed information is received from any terminal unit of the terminal units.

Claim 42 (Canceled).

Claim 43 (Currently Amended): A central control system configured to control a plurality of apparatuses divided into a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, based on ~~status~~service information received by said central control system from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus, said central system being included in a remote control system, said central control system comprising:

an information accumulation unit configured to accumulate ~~status~~corresponding service information when said ~~status~~service information is received by said central control system from any apparatus of said plurality of apparatuses to be remotely controlled; ~~and~~

an information retrieval unit configured to retrieve ~~the status~~said corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when ~~apparatus~~said service information is related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material and is received by said central control system from said at least an image forming apparatus; and

said central control system is configured to select based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus.

Claim 44 (Currently Amended): The central control system according to claim 43, further comprising:

an information processing unit configured to process said ~~status~~corresponding service information which is acquired from said plurality of apparatuses and is retrieved by said information retrieval unit; and

an information transmission unit configured to connect to terminal units provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses, and subsequently transmitting said information processed by said information processing unit.

Claim 45 (Previously Presented): The central control system according to claim 43, further comprising:

an information setting unit configured to set said information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material in advance of retrieving said status information, for which said retrieval by said information retrieval unit is allowed.

Claim 46 (Currently Amended): The central control system according to claim 43, further comprising:

a group setting unit configured to set a group in advance of retrieving said ~~status~~corresponding service information by dividing said plurality of image forming apparatuses into said predetermined number of groups.

Claim 47 (Original): The central control system according to claim 44, further comprising:

an information alteration and addition unit configured to perform alteration and addition onto said information processed by said information processing unit.

Claim 48 (Original): The central control system according to claim 44, further comprising:

an information destination setting unit configured to set a destination of information transmission performed by said information transmission unit.

Claim 49 (Previously Presented): The central control system according to claim 44, further comprising:

an information transmitting unit configured to transmit said information processed by said information processing unit when a request for acquiring said processed information is received from any terminal unit of the terminal units.

Claim 50 (Currently Amended): A central control system configured to control a plurality of apparatuses divided in a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, based on ~~status~~service information received by said central control system from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus, said central control system being included in a remote control system, said central control system comprising:

an information collection unit configured to collect ~~the status~~corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said service information is related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material and is received by said central control system from said at least an image forming apparatus;

a first information processing unit configured to process said information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material received from said at least an image forming apparatus;

a first information transmission unit configured to connect to terminal units provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses, and subsequently transmit said information processed by said first information processing unit;

an information accumulation unit configured to accumulate said corresponding service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material when

said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material is received from said at least an image forming apparatus;

an information retrieval unit configured to retrieve said ~~status~~corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus ~~when~~ said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material is received by said central control system from said at least an image forming apparatus;

a second information processing unit configured to process said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material from said at least an image forming apparatus and retrieved by said information retrieval unit;

a second information transmission unit configured to connect to the terminal units so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses, and subsequently transmit said information processed by said second information processing unit; ~~and~~

a decision unit configured to determine whether or not an execution command is sent to one of said information collection unit, said first information processing unit, said first information transmission unit, said information retrieval unit, said second information processing unit, and said second information transmission unit; and

said central control system is configured to select based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus.

Claim 51 (Currently Amended): A computer accessible recording medium, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by a central control system included in a remote control system to perform a method for controlling a plurality of apparatuses divided in a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, based on

~~status~~service information received by said central control system from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus, said method comprising:

collecting by an information collection unit ~~the status~~corresponding service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when ~~apparatus~~said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material is received by said central control system from said at least an image forming apparatus; and

selecting based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus.

Claim 52 (Currently Amended): The computer accessible recording medium according to claim 51, said method further comprising:

processing by an information processing unit said ~~status~~corresponding service information which is acquired from said plurality of apparatuses and is collected by said information collection unit;

connecting said central control system to terminal units provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses, by an information transmission unit; and

transmitting said information processed by said information processing unit.

Claim 53 (Currently Amended): The computer accessible recording medium according to claim 51, said method further comprising:

setting said ~~apparatus~~service information in advance of collecting said ~~status~~corresponding service information, for which said collection by said information collection unit is allowed.

Claim 54 (Currently Amended): The computer accessible recording medium according to claim 51, said method further comprising:

setting a group in advance of collecting said ~~status~~corresponding service information by dividing said plurality of image forming apparatuses into said predetermined number of groups

Claim 55 (Currently Amended): A computer accessible recording medium, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by a central control system included in a remote control system to perform a method for controlling a plurality of apparatuses divided in a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, based on ~~status~~service information received by said central control system from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus, said method comprising:

accumulating ~~said status~~corresponding service information when ~~apparatus~~said service information is received by said central control system from any apparatus of said plurality of apparatuses to be remotely controlled; ~~and~~

retrieving the ~~status~~corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said service information is related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material and is received by said central control system from said at least an image forming apparatus; and

selecting based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus.

Claim 56 (Currently Amended): The computer accessible recording medium according to claim 55, said method further comprising:

processing by an information processing unit said ~~status~~corresponding service information which is acquired from said plurality of apparatuses and is retrieved by an information retrieval unit;

connecting said central control system to terminal units provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses by an information transmission unit; and

transmitting said information processed by said information processing unit.

Claim 57 (Currently Amended): The computer accessible recording medium according to claim 55, said method further comprising:

setting said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material in advance of accumulating said ~~status~~corresponding service information, for which said retrieval by said information retrieval unit is allowed.

Claim 58 (Currently Amended): The computer accessible recording medium according to claim 55, said method further comprising:

setting a group in advance of accumulating said ~~status~~corresponding service information by dividing said plurality of image forming apparatuses into said predetermined number of groups.

Claim 59 (Previously Presented): The computer accessible recording medium according to claim 52, said method further comprising:

performing alteration and addition onto said information processed by said information processing unit.

Claim 60 (Previously Presented): The computer accessible recording medium according to claim 52, said method further comprising:

setting a destination of information transmission performed by said information transmission unit.

Claim 61 (Previously Presented): The computer accessible recording medium according to claim 52, said method further comprising:

outputting said information processed by said information processing unit through at least one of an image formation on a display device, a data recording on a paper sheet, or an audible voice.

Claim 62 (Previously Presented): The computer accessible recording medium according to claim 52, said method further comprising:

transmitting said information processed by said information processing unit when a request for acquiring said processed information is received from any terminal unit of the terminal units.

Claim 63 (Previously Presented): The computer accessible recording medium according to claim 56, said method further comprising:

performing alteration and addition onto said information processed by said information processing unit.

Claim 64 (Previously Presented): The computer accessible recording medium according to claim 56, said method further comprising:

setting a destination of information transmission performed by said information transmission unit.

Claim 65 (Previously Presented): The computer accessible recording medium according to claim 56, said method further comprising:

outputting said information processed by said information processing unit through at least one of an image formation on a display device, a recording data on a paper sheet, or an audible voice.

Claim 66 (Previously Presented): The computer accessible recording medium according to claim 56, said method further comprising:

transmitting said information processed by said information processing unit when a request for acquiring said processed information is received from any terminal unit of the terminal units.

Claim 67 (Currently Amended): A computer accessible recording medium, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by a central control system included in a remote control system to perform a method for controlling a plurality of apparatuses divided into a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, based

on ~~status~~service information received by said central control system from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus, said method comprising:

collecting ~~the status~~corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said service information is related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material and is received by said central control system from said at least an image forming apparatus, by information collecting means;

processing said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material received from said at least an image forming apparatus by first information processing means;

connecting said central control system to respective terminal units provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses, and subsequently transmitting said information processed by said first information processing means;

accumulating said ~~status~~corresponding service information when said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material is received from said at least an image forming apparatus, said ~~status~~corresponding service information being transmitted by first information transmitting means;

retrieving said ~~status~~corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material is received by said central control system from said at least an image forming apparatus, said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material being retrieved by information retrieving means;

processing said ~~status~~corresponding service information by second information processing means, said ~~status~~corresponding service information received from said any apparatus of said plurality of apparatuses and retrieved by said information retrieval means;

selecting based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus;

connecting said central control system to said terminal units provided by said plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses, and subsequently transmitting said information processed by said second information transmission means; and

determining whether an execution command is sent to one of said information collection means, said first information processing means, said first information transmission means, said information retrieval means, said second information processing means, and said second information transmission means.

Claim 68 (Currently Amended): A remote control system for controlling a plurality of apparatuses divided into a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, comprising:

central control means, comprising at least computer means, for receiving ~~status~~service information from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus and for remotely controlling said plurality of apparatuses based on said ~~status~~service information; ~~and~~

information collection means for collecting ~~the status~~corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least

an image forming apparatus when ~~apparatus~~said service information is received by said central control means from said at least an image forming apparatus of said plurality of apparatuses to be remotely controlled; and

said computer unit is configured to select based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus.

Claim 69 (Currently Amended): The remote control system according to claim 68, further comprising:

information processing means for processing said ~~status~~corresponding service information which is acquired from said plurality of apparatuses and is collected by said information collection means; and

information transmission means for connecting to terminal units provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses and subsequently transmitting said information processed by said information processing means.

Claim 70 (Currently Amended): The remote control system according to claim 68, further comprising:

means for setting said ~~apparatus~~service information in advance of collecting said ~~status~~corresponding service information, for which said collection by said information collection means is allowed.

Claim 71 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 68, wherein said information collected, from all of said plurality of apparatuses to be remotely controlled, by said information collection means is related to pre-maintenance.

Claim 72 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 68, wherein said information collected, from all of said plurality of apparatuses to be remotely controlled, by said information collection means is related to expendable supplies and material.

Claim 73 (Currently Amended): The remote control system according to claim 68, further comprising:

group setting means for setting a group in advance of collecting said ~~status~~corresponding service information by dividing said plurality of image forming apparatuses into said predetermined number of groups.

Claim 74 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 69, further comprising:

means for performing alteration and addition onto said information processed by said information processing means.

Claim 75 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 69, further comprising:

means for setting a destination of information transmission performed by said information transmission means.

Claim 76 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 69, further comprising:

means for outputting said information processed by said information processing means through at least one of an image formation on a display device, a data recording on a paper sheet, or an audible voice.

Claim 77 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 69, further comprising:

means for transmitting said information processed by said information processing means when a request for acquiring said processed information is received from any terminal unit of the terminal units.

Claim 78 (Currently Amended): A remote control system for controlling a plurality of apparatuses divided into a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, comprising:

central control means, comprising at least computer means, for receiving ~~status~~service information from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus and for remotely controlling said plurality of apparatuses based on said ~~status~~service information;

information accumulation means for accumulating ~~apparatus~~corresponding service information when said ~~apparatus~~service information is received by said central control means from said at least an image forming apparatus of said plurality of apparatuses to be remotely controlled; ~~and~~

information retrieval means for retrieving ~~the status~~said corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said ~~apparatus~~service information is received by said central control means from said at least an image forming apparatus; and

said central control means is configured to select based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus.

Claim 79 (Currently Amended): The remote control system according to claim 78, further comprising:

information processing means for processing said ~~status~~corresponding service information which is acquired from said plurality of apparatuses and is retrieved by said information retrieval means; and

information transmission means for connecting to terminal means provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses and subsequently transmitting said information processed by said information processing means.

Claim 80 (Currently Amended): The remote control system according to claim 78, further comprising:

means for setting said apparatus information in advance of retrieving said ~~status~~corresponding service information, for which said retrieval by said information retrieval means is allowed.

Claim 81 (Currently Amended): The remote control system according to claim 78, wherein said ~~status~~corresponding service information which is acquired from said plurality of apparatuses and is retrieved by said information retrieval means is related to pre-maintenance.

Claim 82 (Currently Amended): The remote control system according to claim 78, wherein said ~~status~~corresponding service information acquired from all of said plurality of apparatuses to be remotely controlled by said information accumulation means is related to expendable supplies and material.

Claim 83 (Currently Amended): The remote control system according to claim 78, further comprising:

group setting means for setting a group in advance of accumulating said ~~status~~corresponding service information by dividing said plurality of image forming apparatuses into said predetermined number of groups.

Claim 84 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 83, further comprising:

a plurality of communication adapters means connected to said plurality of image forming apparatuses for communicating with said central control means,

wherein said group setting means divides said plurality of image forming apparatuses into a number of groups each assigned to said communication adapters means.

Claim 85 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 83, further comprising:

a plurality of communication adapters means connected to said plurality of image forming apparatuses for communicating with said central control means,

wherein said group setting means divides said plurality of image forming apparatuses into a number of groups each assigned to a predetermined number of said respective communication adapters means.

Claim 86 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 83,

wherein said plurality of image forming apparatuses are interconnected by way of communication network means incorporating network control means, and

wherein said group setting means divides said plurality of image forming apparatuses into a number of groups each assigned to an IP address in said communication network means.

Claim 87 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 83,

wherein said plurality of image forming apparatuses are interconnected by way of communication network means incorporating network control means, and

wherein said group setting means divides said plurality of image forming apparatuses into a number of groups each assigned to a predetermined number of IP addresses in said communication network means.

Claim 88 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 79, further comprising:

means for performing alteration and addition onto said information processed by said information processing means.

Claim 89 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 79, further comprising:

means for setting a destination of information transmission performed by said information transmission means.

Claim 90 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 79, further comprising:

means for outputting said information processed by said information processing means through at least one of an image formation on a display device, a data recording on a paper sheet, or an audible voice.

Claim 91 (Previously Presented): The remote control system according to claim 79, further comprising:

means for transmitting said information processed by said information processing means when a request for acquiring said processed information is received from any terminal means.

Claim 92 (Currently Amended): A remote control system for controlling a plurality of apparatuses divided into a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, comprising:

central control means, comprising at least computer means, for receiving ~~status~~service information from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus and for remotely controlling said plurality of apparatuses based on said ~~status~~service information;

information collection means for collecting ~~the status~~corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when ~~apparatus~~said service information is received by said central control means from said at least an image forming apparatus ;

first information processing means for processing said ~~apparatus~~service information received from said at least an image forming apparatus;

first information transmission means for connecting to terminal means provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses and subsequently transmitting said information processed by said first information processing means;

information accumulation means for accumulating said ~~status~~corresponding service information when said ~~apparatus~~service information is received from said at least an image forming apparatus;

information retrieval means for retrieving said ~~status~~corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said ~~apparatus~~service information is received by said central control means;

second information processing means for processing said ~~apparatus~~service information received from said at least an image forming apparatus and retrieved by said information retrieval means;

second information transmission means for connecting to the terminal means so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses and subsequently transmitting said information processed by said second information processing means; ~~and~~

means for determining whether or not an execution command is sent to one of said information collection means, said first information processing means, said first information transmission means, said information retrieval means, said second information processing means, and said second information transmission means; and

said computer means selecting based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus.

Claim 93 (Currently Amended): A central control system for controlling a plurality of apparatuses divided into a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, based on ~~status~~service information received by said central control means from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus, said central control system being included in a remote control system, said central control system comprising:

information collection means for collecting ~~the status~~corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said service information is related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material and is received by said central control system from said at least an image forming apparatus; and

said central control system is configured to select based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus.

Claim 94 (Currently Amended): The central control system according to claim 93, further comprising:

information processing means for processing said ~~status~~corresponding service information which is acquired from said plurality of apparatuses and is collected by said information collection means;

information transmission means for connecting to a plurality of terminal means provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses and subsequently transmitting said related information processed by said information processing means.

Claim 95 (Currently Amended): The central control system according to claim 93, further comprising:

means for setting said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material in advance of collecting said ~~status~~ corresponding service information, for which said collection by said information collection means is allowed.

Claim 96 (Currently Amended): The central control system according to claim 93, further comprising:

group setting means for setting a group in advance of collecting said ~~status~~corresponding service information by dividing said plurality of image forming apparatuses into said predetermined number of groups.

Claim 97 (Previously Presented): The central control system according to claim 94, further comprising:

means for performing alteration and addition onto said related information processed by said information processing means.

Claim 98 (Previously Presented): The central control system according to claim 94, further comprising:

means for setting a destination of information transmission performed by said information transmission means.

Claim 99 (Previously Presented): The central control system according to claim 94, further comprising:

means for outputting said information processed by said information processing means through at least one of an image formation on a display device, a recording data on a paper sheet, or an audible voice.

Claim 100 (Previously Presented): The central control system according to claim 94, further comprising:

means for transmitting said information processed by said information processing means when a request for acquiring said processed information is received from any terminal means of said plurality of terminal means.

Claim 101 (Canceled).

Claim 102 (Currently Amended): A central control system for controlling a plurality of apparatuses divided into a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, based on ~~status~~service information received by said central control system from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus, said central control system being included in a remote control system, said central control system comprising:

information accumulation means for accumulating corresponding service information when said ~~status~~service information is received by said central control system from any apparatus of said plurality of apparatuses to be remotely controlled; ~~and~~

information retrieval means for retrieving ~~the status~~said corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said service information is related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material and is received by said central control system from said at least an image forming apparatus; and

said central control system is configured to select based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus.

Claim 103 (Currently Amended): The central control system according to claim 102, further comprising:

information processing means for processing said ~~status~~corresponding service information which is acquired from said plurality of apparatuses and is retrieved by said information retrieval means; and

information transmission means for connecting to a plurality of terminal means provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses and subsequently transmitting said information processed by said information processing means.

Claim 104 (Previously Presented): The central control system according to claim 102, further comprising:

means for setting said information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material in advance of retrieving said status information, for which said retrieval by said information retrieval means is allowed.

Claim 105 (Previously Presented): The central control system according to claim 102, further comprising:

group setting means for setting a group in advance of retrieving said status information by dividing said plurality of image forming apparatuses into said predetermined number of groups.

Claim 106 (Previously Presented): The central control system according to claim 103, further comprising:

means for performing alteration and addition onto said information processed by said information processing means.

Claim 107 (Previously Presented): The central control system according to claim 103, further comprising:

means for setting a destination of information transmission performed by said information transmission means.

Claim 108 (Previously Presented): The central control system according to claim 103, further comprising:

means for transmitting said information processed by said information processing means when a request for acquiring said processed information is received from any terminal means of said plurality of terminal means.

Claim 109 (Currently Amended): A central control system for controlling a plurality of apparatuses divided in a predetermined number of groups including at least an image forming apparatus, based on ~~status~~service information received by said central control system from said ~~plurality of apparatuses~~at least an image forming apparatus, said central control system being included in a remote control unit, said central control system comprising:

information collection means for collecting ~~the status~~corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said service information is related to pre-maintenance and

to expendable supplies and material and is received by said central control system from said at least an image forming apparatus;

first information processing means for processing said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material received from said at least an image forming apparatus of said plurality of apparatuses;

first information transmission means for connecting to a plurality of terminal means provided by a plurality of service centers so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses and subsequently transmit said ~~status~~service information processed by said first information processing means;

information accumulation means for accumulating said ~~status~~corresponding service information when said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material is received from said at least an image forming apparatus;

information retrieval means for retrieving said ~~status~~corresponding service information from other image forming apparatuses included in a same group as said at least an image forming apparatus when said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material is received by said central control system from said at least an image forming apparatus;

second information processing means for processing said service information related to pre-maintenance and to expendable supplies and material received from said at least an image forming apparatus and retrieved by said information retrieval means;

second information transmission means for connecting to the plurality of terminal means so as to control said plurality of image forming apparatuses and subsequently transmit said information processed by said second information processing means; ~~and~~

means for determining whether or not an execution command is sent to any one of said information collection means, said first information processing means, said first

information transmission means, said information retrieval means, said second information processing means, and said second information transmission means; and

said central control system is configured to select based on said corresponding service information a set of at least two apparatuses from said plurality of apparatuses that require service as said at least an image forming apparatus.